



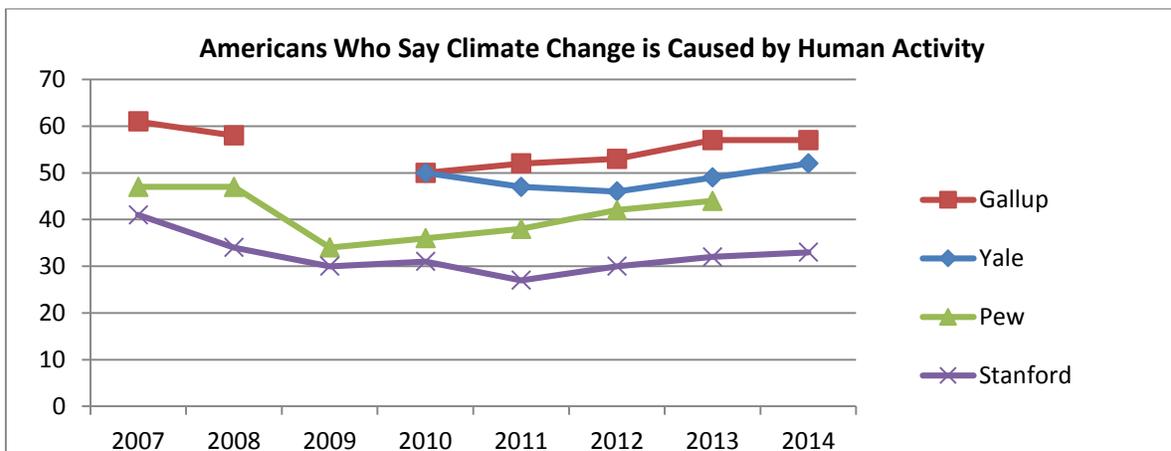
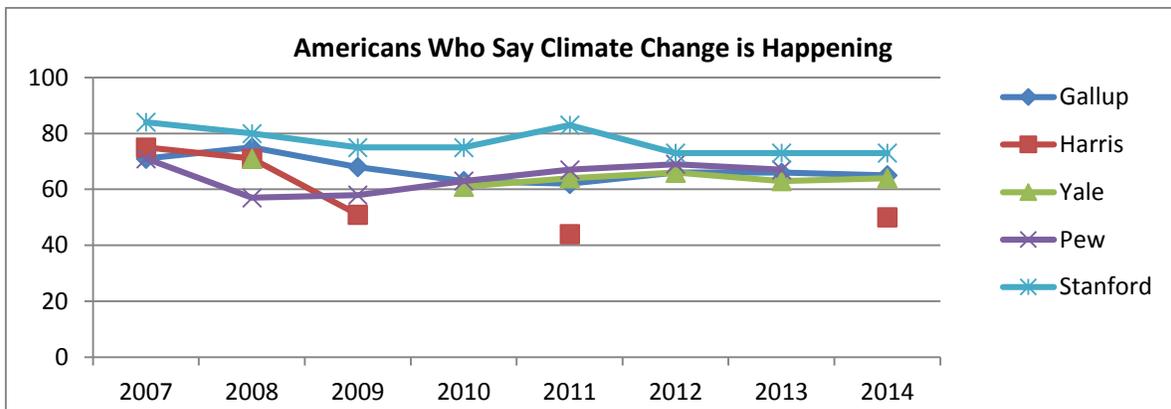
# Fact Sheet

## Polling the American Public on Climate Change

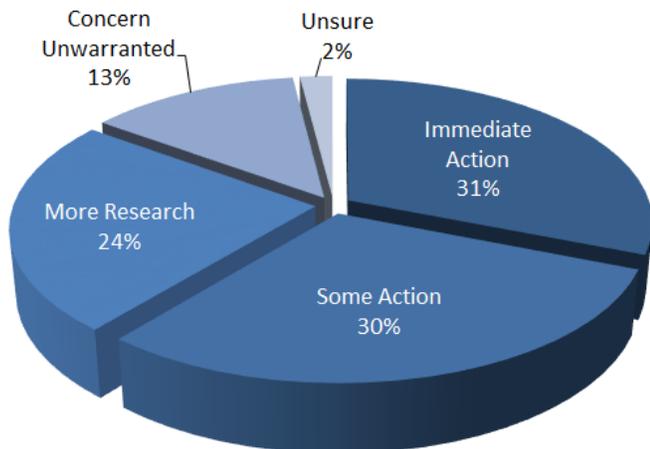
October 2014

This fact sheet provides information on climate change polling in the United States over the last year from a variety of sources. Overall the studies show:

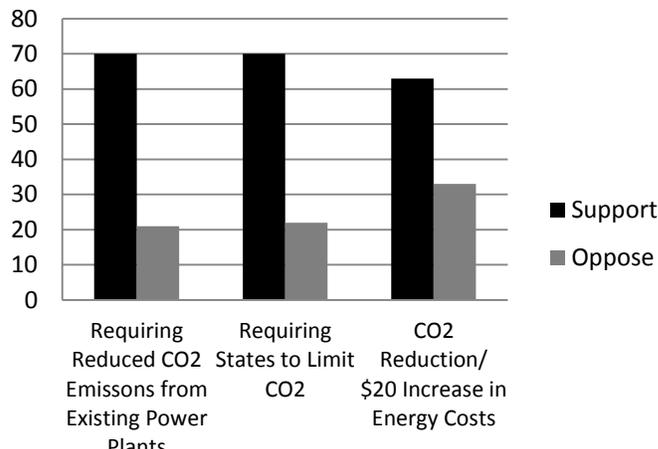
- Belief that climate change is happening and is caused by human actions is continuing to rise, but it still has not reached a level comparable to the 2007 peak
- There is a large disparity among party lines when it comes to climate change, with a large majority of Democrats believing that human actions are changing the climate, while fewer Republicans hold the same belief
- However, the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) proposed carbon dioxide regulations for power plants have widespread support, even across party lines
- There is also support for somewhat higher electricity bills if it means decreasing carbon dioxide pollution



**Should Climate Change Action Be Taken?**  
NBC News/Wall Street Journal June 2014



**Views on EPA Regulation**  
ABC News/Washington Post Poll June 2, 2014



**CLIMATE CHANGE SURVEYS 2013 to 2014**

[CBS News/New York Times](#)

September 10-14, 2014

Sample: 1,000 American adults

- **54% of Americans said global warming is happening, and caused by human behavior; 31% said global warming is happening because of natural causes**
- 42% said global warming is an “imminent threat”
- 61% of Democrats and 26% of Republicans said global warming is having impacts right now

[Pew Research/USA Today](#)

August 20-24, 2014

Sample: 1,501 American adults

- **48% of those surveyed said climate change is a “major threat” to the United States; 30% said it was a “minor threat”**
- 68% of registered Democrats view climate change as one of the greatest threats to the United States, compared to 25% of Republicans

[Quinnipiac University](#)

June 24-30, 2014

Sample: 1,446 registered American voters

- **58% of voters support federal government limitations on greenhouse gas emissions from power plants**
- 30% of voters do not support federal government limits on greenhouse gas emissions from power plants

[NBC News/Wall Street Journal](#)

June 11-15, 2014

Sample: 1,000 American adults

- **67% of Americans support the carbon regulations proposed by President Obama and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)**
- 31% of Americans believe immediate action should be taken to combat climate change
- 57% approve of a proposal that would curb greenhouse gas emissions from companies, even if it leads to higher energy bills

[Bloomberg National Poll](#)

June 6-9, 2014

Sample: 1,005 American adults

- **46% of Americans said climate change is a major threat**
- 50% of Americans think climate action should be taken in the next 10 years
- 51% said that a candidate's support for climate action would make them more likely to vote for them

[Resources for the Future/Stanford University](#)

June 4-8, 2014

Sample: 1,023 American adults

- **73% of Americans believe the world's temperature is increasing, and 33% believe that warming is caused by human action**
- Nearly 90% of Americans favor government action to address climate change, and only 27% believe such action will harm the economy
- 49% of respondents said there should be laws requiring power plants to lower greenhouse gas emissions

[ABC News/Washington Post](#)

May 29-June 1, 2014

Sample: 1,002 American adults

- **84% of Democrats and 49% of Republicans see climate change as a serious problem**
- 70% of respondents support the EPA's new proposed regulations to reduce carbon dioxide emissions from power plants
- 63% of Americans would support carbon reductions even if it led to an increase in their energy costs

[CBS](#)

May 16-19, 2014

Sample: 1,009 American adults

- **46% of respondents believe global climate change is a serious problem that is currently having an impact**
- 49% believe that global warming is mostly caused by the human activity of burning fossil fuels
- 32% are very concerned about global warming, while 34% are somewhat concerned

[Public Religion Research Institute/Brookings](#)

April 7-27, 2014

Sample: 1,538 adults

- **23% of affiliated Democrats believe that enacting policies to address climate change should be the highest priority for President Obama and Congress**
- 6% of Republicans think that climate policies should be the highest priority
- 18% of Americans as a whole say climate change should be the highest political priority

[University of Michigan](#)

March 24-April 9, 2014

Sample: 798 American adults

- **After this past winter, one third of respondents said they don't believe in global warming**
- 56% of Americans who don't believe in evidence of global warming said that their own weather observations are a main factor
- 15% believe that milder winters have a 'very large' influence on their acceptance of global warming, while 24% say milder winters have a 'somewhat' large influence on their opinion
- 55% of Americans believe there is solid evidence for climate change, a 6% decline since fall 2013

[Yale and Harvard Universities](#)

April/May, 2014

Sample: 1,800 Americans

- **75% of Democrats believe that global warming is caused by humans, while 58% of Republicans did not believe there was solid evidence that warming was occurring**
- Very liberal or strong Democrats are much more likely to believe that global warming poses a very high risk to human health and safety, while strong Republicans are more likely to believe that it poses no risk at all

[Yale and George Mason University](#)

April 11-21, 2014

Sample: 1,013 American adults

- **52% of Americans think global warming, if it is happening, is caused by humans**
- 55% of Americans are "somewhat worried" about climate change; 15% are "very worried"
- 16% of Americans say thousands of people worldwide are dying annually from global warming
- 6% think humans can and will reduce global warming; 42% think humans could reduce global warming, but whether we will or not is unclear

[The AP-GfK](#)

March 20-24, 2014

Sample: 1,012 American Adults

- **33% of Americans are extremely or very confident that the temperature of the world is rising because of man-made heat trapping gases**
- 15% are not at all confident that the temperature is rising because of the burning of greenhouse gases

- [Harris](#)      March 12-17, 2014      Sample: 2,234 American adults
- **45% of Americans believe that climate change exists and that humans are mainly responsible for it**
  - 30% believe climate change is happening, but that it is not mainly related to human activity
  - 13% do not believe that climate change exists
  - 31% think the severity of the 2013/2014 winter is proof that climate change is not happening

- [Gallup](#)      March 6-9, 2014      Sample: 1,048 American adults
- **65% of Americans support setting stricter emissions and pollution standards on industry and businesses**
  - 63% support setting mandatory carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gas (GHG) limits
  - However, both of these numbers have gone down significantly since 2007, when 84% supported stricter emissions and pollution standards on industry and 79% supported mandatory CO2 and GHG limits

- [Gallup](#)      March 6-9, 2014      Sample: 1,048 American adults
- **39% of Americans are “Concerned Believers,” meaning they believe global warming is happening, and is caused by humans**
  - 36% of Americans are “Mixed Middle,” signifying they hold a combination of views
  - 25% of Americans are “Cool Skeptics,” which means they are not worried much about global warming

- [Gallup](#)      March 6-9, 2014      Sample: 513 American adults
- **24% of those polled said they worry about climate change a great deal, while 31% worry about the quality of the environment**
  - 36% of Democrats worry about the issue of climate change a great deal, while 10% of Republicans worry about it a great deal

- [Pew Research Center](#)      January 15-19, 2014      Sample: 1,504 American adults
- **29% of Americans viewed climate change as a “top priority” for President Obama and Congress this year, ranking 19th out of 20 issues tested**
  - 42% of Democrats view “dealing with global warming” as a “top priority”
  - 49% of Americans view protecting the environment as a “top priority,” ranking 12th out of 20

- [Yale and George Mason Universities](#)      Nov. 23–Dec. 9, 2013      Sample: 830 American adults
- **37% of Americans (almost four in ten) think global warming should be a high priority for the President and Congress, and 71% say it should be a medium priority**
  - 60% of Americans said the United States should reduce greenhouse gas emissions, regardless of other countries’ actions
  - 83% of Americans say the U.S. should act on global warming, even if there are economic costs

- [Yale and George Mason Universities](#)      Nov. 23–Dec. 9, 2013      Sample: 830 American adults
- **38% of those surveyed believe they will be personally harmed by climate change, 65% believe future generations will be harmed, and 65% believe plant and animal species will be harmed**
  - 63% of Americans believe climate change is happening, while 23% of Americans don’t believe it is
  - The percentage of Americans who were previously ‘unsure’ about climate change has dropped from 20% in Spring 2013, to 14% in Fall 2013
  - 42% of Americans felt ‘hopeful’ when thinking about climate change, while 42% said they felt helpless, 42% felt disgusted and 40% felt sad

- [USA Today](#)      Nov. 20 – Dec. 5, 2013      Sample: 801 American adults
- **Three in five Americans see global warming as a serious problem, with two in three Americans believing it will have lasting negative effects on future generations**
  - 71% of Americans say they can see the physical effects of global warming
  - 28% of Americans believe that global warming made the damage from Superstorm Sandy ‘much worse,’ although 41% of Americans believe global warming did not impact Sandy
  - 55% of Americans support regulations on power plant greenhouse gas emissions

[National Resources Defense Council](#)

Nov. 25- Dec. 4, 2013

Sample: 850 Latino Americans

- **Nine in ten Latinos want the government to take action on climate change**
- 68% of Republican Latinos say it is important (and 46% say very or extremely important) for the U.S. government to take action on climate change
- 86% of Latinos support limiting carbon dioxide emissions from power plants

[Pew Research Center](#)

October 9-13, 2013

Sample 1,504 American adults

- **Two thirds (67%) of the American public say there is “solid evidence” of climate change**
- 44% of Americans say there is both “solid evidence” for climate change and it is caused by human activity; 18% believe climate change is naturally occurring
- 66% of Democrats, 24% of Republicans, and 43% of Independents say climate change is happening, and is caused by human activity

[Huffington Post/YouGov](#)

June 19-20, 2013

Sample: 1,000 American adults

- **33% of Americans approve of how the president is handling the issue of climate change, while 40% disapprove of the president’s handling of climate change**
- 63% of Democrats approve of Obama’s work on climate change, along with 27% of independents and 6% of Republicans
- 47% of Americans said they approve of new climate change policies, while 32% oppose them.

[Yale and George Mason Universities](#)

April 8–15, 2013

Sample: 1,045 American adults

- **Two thirds (63%) of Americans surveyed said they believe climate change is happening – a 7% drop since Fall 2012**
- 51% of those surveyed are ‘somewhat worried’ or ‘very worried’ about climate change, also a 7 percent drop from Fall 2012
- Four out of ten Americans are worried about climate change affecting their community (45%), their family (44%), or themselves (42%)

---

**Authors: Katherine Lynn and Emily Jackson**  
**Editor: Laura Small**

*The Environmental and Energy Study Institute (EESI) is a non-profit organization founded in 1984 by a bipartisan Congressional caucus dedicated to finding innovative environmental and energy solutions. EESI works to protect the climate and ensure a healthy, secure, and sustainable future for America through policymaker education, coalition building, and policy development in the areas of energy efficiency, renewable energy, agriculture, forestry, transportation, buildings, and urban planning.*